

## **Sundre Paddling Club – Red Deer River – Access/Egress – River Information**

Brief excerpts from Stuart Smith's book, "Canadian Rockies Whitewater – The Central Rockies", copyright 1996 are used to flesh out this guide for kayakers and canoeists of Sundre and area.

**NB: THIS INFORMATION GUIDE IS THAT ONLY, PROVIDING ACCESS/EGRESS TO PADDLING REACHES OF THE RED DEER RIVER. KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS RIVER'S CHARACTERISTICS CHANGE WITH FLOW CHANGE, FLOOD CHANGE AND WINTER'S ICE REROUTING, ALWAYS SCOUT PRIOR TO PADDLING IF UNSURE OF THE ROUTE AHEAD.**

### **SUNDRE PADDLING CLUB STORAGE GARAGE ADDRESS**

N51.802125, W114.644129

Club Storage Garage location behind high school between rodeo grounds and high school

### **PRAIRIE CREEK EGRESS**

N51.793760 W114.640391

Sundre Town Campground parking lot by foot bridge

3<sup>rd</sup> St. SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW

Exit river left prior to Highway 27 bridge at Prairie Creek mouth, paddle 15 meters up creek exiting on left, up small bank. Another egress is right river berm prior to Highway 22 bridge.

### **AIRPORT ROAD ACCESS to PRAIRIE CREEK EGRESS**

N51.752720 W114.688553

At pavement end follow dirt/pothole trail approximately ½ kilometer to rivers edge and substantial gravel bar to access river.

**Description:** This 9 kilometer section of Grade II river runs through an open valley with a few small rapids. Watch for occasional log jams on corners, dead heads mid-stream and sweepers on exposed river banks.

## **RR63 – COALCAMP ROAD ACCESS to PRAIRIE CREEK EGRESS**

N51.752777 W114.688646

Go west of Sundre on Highway 584 to RR63, turn left on Coalcamp Road and travel south 3 kilometers to beginning of curve where a gravel trail continues south to iron gates that are fake locked. Continue ½ kilometer to rivers edge for access to river.

**Description:** This 17 kilometer section of Grade II river runs through an open valley with a few small rapids. Watch for occasional log jams on corners, dead heads mid- stream and sweepers on exposed river banks.

**NOTE:** There is no road access to river on RR60, foot access only, and river access from RR61 is small flowing channel crossing, down gravel/dirt trail to at a quick flowing channel.

## **COALCAMP ACCESS 4 32009 Range Road 64**

N51.709412, W114.841088

**Description:** This 12.8 kilometer section of Grade II medium volume river runs through an open valley with a few small rapids. Watch for occasional log jams on corners, dead heads mid- stream and sweepers on exposed river banks. There is a good rapid river right at the start with easier section below to RR63 access. Emergency egress to Coalcamp Road river right through private property for first 2/3's of run.

**NB: RESPECT THE McALLISTER PROPERTY BY NOT PARKING ON IT UNLESS HE IS PARTICIPATING IN THE RIVER RUN.**

Access to the river is a difficult portage down a steep wooded river bank, across a small channel and gravel bar island to get to the main river flow from parking area at end of Coalcamp Village Road. 508 32009 Range Road 64, N51.709873, W114.834769

### **DOUBLE LEDGE (70010 Township Road 315A) TO COALCAMP**

N51.690911, W114.884582

Description: This 4.2 km stretch of river contains a number of small rapids, with small ledges, eddies and good surfing waves. Access to the river is a small pull out on south side of road. A short hike down a steep river bank will give you river access. The run begins either above class III-IV Double Ledge for the whitewater junkies or below for a calmer start. There are numerous eddies both sides of river to practice eddy turns. Approximately 500 metres from Double Ledge is a  $\frac{3}{4}$  river wide ledge, river right that can be bypassed on inside of corner, then watch for **ADRENALINE**, a river wide ledge 200 metres down stream. Numerous opportunities are provided down- stream for eddy turns and surfing in easier water that leads to class II-III Coalcamp ledge. Small ledges continue for remainder of run to village of Coalcamp. As well there are numerous access points along this river route if you wish a shorter river run.

### **WILLIAMS CREEK (3179 Township Road 314A) TO COALCAMP**

N51.692829, W114.954516

Description: This 10.3 km stretch of river from a pull out on south side of road near mouth of Williams Creek begins with a scramble down a riff raff rock strewn left river bank. This stretch of river to Double Ledge is open with a few small rapids. See previous description for remainder of run.

### **CACHE HILL (3194 Township Road 314A) TO WILLIAMS CREEK**

N51.649509, W115.024324 left turn (south) on west side of Cache Hill, follow dirt trail 600 metres to river access

N51.651514, W115.017367 river access

Description: This 8.4 km medium to large-volume class II-II+ run is in a scenic valley with few major rapids. Most of the challenges consist of corners and a few split channels. There is a small ledge directly below the put-in on river left which can be run left of boulder or off the gravel bar on right of boulder dependent on water levels. Following this the river runs in an open channel with a few sets of waves and easy rapids where the river drops of gravel shoals. Expect a couple of tighter channels where the river flows around islands as well as some boulder gardens and small ledges. There are good views of the

surrounding foothills. There is no easy egress from the river till the takeout at Williams Creek.

### **BULL CREEK HILL (WISENCHUCKS) (Township Road 312A) TO CACHE HILL**

N51.642947, W115.093879 Left turn at bottom of hill, follow dirt trail 300+ metres to river access

N51.640204, W115.094137 river access

Description: This 7.6 km medium to large volume run in a scenic river valley with rapids scattered throughout. The biggest rapids are in the last few kilometers of the run. At medium to high flows expect some great surf spots. Approximately 2.3 kilometers down stream of put-in you will encounter a diagonal Class II ledge at the Sauna Hole. The river then flows approximately 500 metres slightly to the right with an island not far below splitting river flow in two channels. At time of this writing, in the right channel, there is a log jam on right river bank with Class II ledge to negotiate. The river opens up for approximately 2.5 kilometers, then you encounter four ledges, which are Class II-III. The second and final ledges are the most difficult. The final excitement is the ClassII-II+ Cache Hill Rapids beneath the steep cliff on river right, just above the take-out.

### **DEER CREEK GROUP CAMPSITE ACCESS**

N51.655561, W115.131968

Description: Access to the river is a 400 metre walk to the south across the meadow. This 3.6 kilometer run flows in an open channel, till the first rapid, Class II Boulder Gardens approximately 1 kilometer from put-in. Difficulty eases as you reach Bull Hill egress.

### **PIPELINE/POWERLINE, NATIONALS SITE ACCESS**

N51.652501, W115.149718

Description: Access to river is an easy hike downhill, 75 metres. This run from Powerline/Pipeline to Bull Creek Hill is approximately 12.4 kilometers. You will encounter Class II-III+ rapids, the Nationals Site, water level dependent, in the first 250-500 metres of this run.

The Nationals Site is a 200 metre long rapid composed of broken, low-angled ledges. At low flows the rapid is technical, with scattered holes, while at high flows the water piles up to create large standing waves and much bigger recirculations behind the ledges. The take out is just below the Nationals Site at Deer Creek Group Campsite if you just wish to paddle Nationals Site.

## **S-BENDS**

Two access points: N51.654236, W115.164349, N51.653585, W115.175854

Description: South of the Coalcamp/Ya Ha Tinda Road is a dirt access road between these two coordinates. Half way down this dirt road is S-Bend, a Class II-III rapid with a series of low-angled ledges that produce excellent surfing and hole-riding, depending on water level. The ledges are accessed on the south side of the island by either crossing a dry river channel or wading.

## **GOOSEBERRY LEDGE TO PIPELINE/POWERLINE**

Dirt Trail Turnoff N51.651348, W115.188702

River Access N51.648415, W115.189852

Description: From the Pipeline/Powerline crossing go approximately 2.8 kilometers to a small dirt trail on the south side of the road which crosses an open grassy area. Follow the trail approximately 400 hundred metres to near the river.

From Deer Creek Group Campsite it is approximately 4 kilometers to the dirt trail on south side of road.

The action begins immediately at a couple of small ledges. These drops are just above Gooseberry Ledge, a Class III diagonal rock outcrop, where the river drops 1 metre through a series of slots into a recirculation. Just downstream is Jimbo's Staircase, a 100 metre long series of small, Class II-III ledges, with broken slots on the right side. This is followed by a fast chute through a set of bedrock outcrops where the river is constricted by rock walls. The river opens up for about 800 metres, then you reach a right turn where a high water an island splits the channel. This is the S-Bend, a Class II-III rapid with a series of low-angled ledges that produce excellent surfing and hole riding depending on the water level. Stay left to avoid all the excitement. The egress point is the pipeline or paddle the National's Site and take out either Pipeline/Powerline or Deer Creek Group Campsite or Blue Creek Hill (Wisenchucks).

**NB: Below, river left, of Jimbo's Staircase and bedrock outcrops, egress can be made via a rough trail leading up to main road or grassy area.**

## **HIGHWAY 734 TO GOOSEBERRY LEDGE**

Description: The river flows on a gravel bed, in a single channel, for most of the run. There are a few islands and braided sections. The major rapids are formed by bedrock outcrops.

Access Points:

Picnic Site south east of Blue Bridge and Mountaineer Lodge Class II-II+

312038 Highway 734 N51.65608, W115.284302

The river travels to the east from Picnic Site to Gooseberry Ledge approximately 7.2 kilometers. The river flows in a single channel for the first couple of kilometers. After a short, calm section at the start, the river has numerous small rapids at bends and constrictions and becomes braided in the middle section. Approximately 4.6 kilometers downstream, the main channel drops off a Class II ledge, 0.5-1 metre high, with a chute in the center. After this there are some waves and partial ledges, and the river flows in braided channels until the take-out. Mark the take-out to avoid the whitewater below – Gooseberry Ledge and Jimbo's Staircase.

Yara Creek Trail – junction of Highway 734 and Township Road 312B

N51.653915, W115.250359

Follow trail down east side of Yara Creek approximately 600 metres to access river. River distance from Yara Creek access to Gooseberry Ledge approximately 4.6 kilometers.

Gravel Road Access South Side of River

N51.650998, W115.262532

Cross river at Highway 734 bridge continuing on for 2 kilometres till trail on left and follow approximately 400 metres down to river access. River distance from this access point to Gooseberry Ledge approximately 6 kilometers.